

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. Claims 11-20 have been added.

The Office Action dated October 24, 2003, has been received and carefully reviewed along with the references cited therein. As a result of that Office Action, claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higgins in view of Takahashi. The references and the examiner's grounds for rejection have been carefully reviewed; however it is believed that claims 1-10 patentably define over this combination of references. New claims 11-20 have been added to further define the present invention and are also believed to be allowable. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-20 is therefore respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

As the examiner is aware, an aspect of the present invention comprises an image processing method and system in which image editing is carried out according to a "sensation expression" such as "brighter" or "softer." Appropriate processing steps are carried out in response to the selected sensation expression. The method and system also generate a "general sensation expression script." As defined at page 5, lines 2-8 of the present specification, a "general sensation expression script" comprises "a script representing the content of the editing instruction and excluding an effect caused by a variance of image impression due

to a sensation of a person generating an editing instruction for an image or a condition of viewing the image for which the editing instruction is being generated." The excluded effect may, for example, relate to the characteristics of the display device on which the user is viewing the image. Thus, in order to generate a general sensation expression script, conditions associated with the viewing of the image should be taken into account.

Claim 1 stands rejected as being unpatentable over Higgins in view of Takahashi. Higgins shows a system for automatically optimizing image quality. The Office Action acknowledges that Higgins does not show the generation of a general sensation expression script. However, Takahashi is cited to show the generation of a general sensation expression script. No motivation to combine Higgins and Takahashi has been provided. Nevertheless, it is respectfully submitted that, based on the meaning of "general sensation expression script" provided in the specification, Takahashi cannot be said to produce a general sensation expression script. Therefore, even if a motivation to combine Higgins and Takahashi were present, such combination would not result in or render obvious the invention required by claim 1.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and is submitted to be allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 3 also stands rejected as being unpatentable over Higgins in view of Takahashi. Like claim 1, claim 3 uses the

phrase "general sensation expression script." The cited art does not disclose a general sensation expression script as required by claim 3 and therefore claim 3 is submitted to patentably distinguish over the cited art.

Claim 4 depends from claim 3 and is therefore submitted to be allowable for the same reasons as claim 3.

Claim 5 stands rejected as being unpatentable over Higgins in view of Takahashi. Like claims 1 and 3, claim 5 uses the phrase "general sensation expression script." The cited art does not disclose a general sensation expression script as required by claim 5 and therefore claim 5 is submitted to patentably distinguish over the prior art.

Claims 6-7 and 9 depend from claim 5 and are therefore submitted to be allowable for the same reasons as claim 5.

Claim 8 stands rejected as being unpatentable over Higgins in view of Takahashi. Claim 8 also includes the phrase "general sensation expression script." As discussed above, the cited art does not disclose a general sensation expression script. Claim 8 is therefore also submitted to patentably distinguish over the prior art.

Claim 10 depends from claim 8 and is submitted to be allowable for the same reasons as claim 8.

Newly added claims 11, 15 and 16 depend from claim 1; newly added claims 12 and 17 depend from claim 3; newly added claims 13,

and 18 depend from claim 5; and newly added claims 14, 19 and 20 depend from claim 8. Each of these claims is respectfully submitted to be allowable for the reasons provided above in connection with the independent claims upon which each depends.

Each issue raised in the Office Action dated October 24, 2003, has been addressed, and it is believed that claims 1-20 are in condition for allowance. Wherefore reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-10 and examination and allowance of claims 11-20 is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

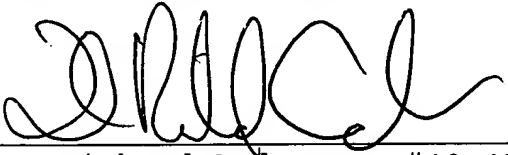
Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$110.00 is attached hereto.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Scott T. Wakeman (Reg. No. 37,750) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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